Panther lawyers say jury tainted

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Black Panther lawyers have complained that a federal judge may have prejudiced the jury in a Panther damage suit against former State's Atty. Edward V. Hanrahan and other officials.

Dennis Cunningham charged in court that U.S. District Court Judge Joseph Sam Perry misled the jurors about the potential length of the trial, which is to begin next week.

Cunningham, one of the Panther lawyers, accused Perry of repeatedly telling jurors that the trial was likely to last two or three months.

When the jury selection was completed Friday, Cunningham asked Perry to inform the jury that the trial might run four to six months.

HE CONTENDED THAT Perry's "serious underestimate" might cause resentment to occur among the jurors when the trial continues longer.

But the judge refused to readvise the jury. "We'll only be inviting trouble."